Draft

Kansas State Historical Society
6425 SW 6th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66615-1099
785-272-8681, ext. 240

PRELIMINARY SITE INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE (PSIQ)

This questionnaire is intended to provide preliminary information to assist in evaluating a property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places and/or the Register of Historic Kansas Places. **It is not a nomination form.** If, on the basis of this information, the property appears to meet the criteria for the register listing, we will send a nomination form to you. If you have any questions about this questionnaire, contact us at the number above.

Please be sure to include with this questionnaire at least six interior and six exterior photographs, and, if available, a historic view of the property. Digital photographs will not be accepted. In answering these questions, you may use additional pages as necessary. Return the questionnaire to the address above.

Do you wish to pursue listing for the state register only or for national register listing? (All buildings on the National Register are also listed on the State Register.)

Kansas only _____ National ____√

1. Name of Property:

Original Hand Dug Seneca Water Well

2. Address or description of location:
Seneca City Park
Block 34
301 North 11th Street
Seneca, Kansas

3. Original Use:
Water Works
For human consumption

4: Present Use:
Water Works
For watering golf course

5. Date(s) of construction and of any major changes:
Began April 1895
Constructed in 1896, deepened in 1899

6: Name and address of owner:
City of Seneca, 603 Main, Seneca, KS 66538

7. Original owner or occupant:
City of Seneca, 603 Main, Seneca, KS 66538

8. ~~Architect~~ or builder: BURRELL
F.L. Barrel, of Freemont, NE - architect
James T. Broughal, of Kansas City, Mo - builder

9. Why is the property historically or architecturally important:
The Seneca City council minutes of April 10, 1895 recorded, "Decision was made to locate a city well on the west side of the city." The bid from James T. Broughal, of Kansas City, Mo, to build a water works was accepted. The project was to start within ten days of April 15, 1895, and to be completed within four months. The project also included laying water lines throughout the city. J. T. Broughal was granted several time extensions, than disappeared. On October 22, 1895, the city council voted to acquire "pumps and machinery to complete the well". On January 22, 1896, Charles Bradshaw was paid $200.00 for use of tools, clamshell, engine and boiler to be used while completing the Water Works.

10. Briefly describe the property. Describe the original form and any major changes, inside and out, that may have occurred. Be sure to point out any notable features. If the property includes outbuildings or notable landscape features, mention them also.)

The hand dug water well is 34 feet across and 65 feet deep. Water depth is approximately 25 feet and has remained at that level since at least 1979, long after the well stopped being used for human consumption. This well is now being used to water the golf course fairways.

The old well was discontinued about 1937 when well #1 and well #2 and the million gallon reservoir were built. Well #1 and well #2 are east of Seneca and the reservoir is on First Street. The original 85,000 gall standpipe, located southeast of the Old Well, continued in use until replaced in 1976 by the one-half million gallon water tower.

Water was pumped from the Old Well by engine driven pumps. These pumps were in pits located inside a brick water works building, located southwest of the well. That building was razed in the late 1950's after being used many years for storage.

11. Have there been major ground-disturbing activities after construction? (i.e. external foundation work, landscaping, removal of cisterns, outbuildings or such?) fenced landscaped

On July 19, 1899, "specifications for deepening the pump pit at the Seneca Water Works" were approved. Those specifications also state, "This will also require a new tunnel from the pump pit to the well. This and the lowering of the engines will be considered separately". The tunnel is not evident today, but probably entered the southwest side of the well where the pipe is still in place.

12. Provide a list of sources that document the historical significance of the property.
Seneca Democrat, Feb. 28, 1896; City Archive Records and Minutes; Bob Ackerman- researcher; Kenny Stallbaumer - historian

13. Why is register listing being sought? **To recognize historical and architectural value of the site and encourage the development of a preservation plan with tourism as focus.**

14. Name, address, and telephone number of person submitting this questionnaire:

Dean and DarlAnn S. Rial,
906 North 8th, Seneca, KS 66538
785-336-0053

15: If the person submitting this form is not the property owner, has the owner been contacted and does the owner consent to the consideration of this property for nomination to the national register?

Contacted: **Yes** ☒ No ☐
Consents: Yes: ☒ **No** ☐

16: Submitter's interest in the property:

As a resident of Seneca, the submitter is awed by the historical significance of this old city well. Inquiries about history by tourism groups have prompted research on the well.

17. Date questionnaire submitted: **August 8, 2005**

Attachments:

1. **Historic View of Water Works (Northwest View) from Seneca-Democrat, Feb. 28, 1896**

Photographs:

1. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Exterior: Northern view, Southern façade, Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
2. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Exterior: Northwestern view, Southeastern façade, Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
3. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Exterior: Western view, Eastern façade, Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
4. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Exterior: Northeastern view, Southwestern façade, Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
5. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Exterior: Rock Foundation above ground, Top of Well, Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
6. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Exterior: Cupola, Northwestern view, Southeastern façade, Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
7. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior: Old pump in center of catwalk. Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
8. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior: Screened catwalk-observation deck. Northwestern view. Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
9. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior: Dark ring wood groves between layers of rock and brick walls. Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
10. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior, Three foot walls, Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
11. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior: Entry, Iron ladder which leads from catwalk to boilers. Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
12. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior: Scaffolding. Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
13. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior: Scaffolding. Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
14. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior: Scaffolding and four foot opening to cupola. Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
15. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior: Catwalk platform, southern view. Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.
16. Seneca Hand Dug Water Well, Seneca, Kansas; Interior: Catwalk platform, northern view. Dean Rial-Photographer, August 2005.